TITLE: Disputing a Doubtful Translation: Διακρίνομαι in James 1:6

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I.   INTRODUCTION

English translations of James 1:6 unanimously render διακρινόμενος with some sense of "uncertainty," predominantly using the term "doubt" in some form.[1] This translation is as common as it is demonstrably incorrect.

This article argues that διακρινόμενος should be rendered with some sense of "judging," "divisiveness," or "disunity" rather than "uncertainty" – using the term "disputing" rather than "doubting." Norbert Baumert, David DeGraaf, and Peter Spitaler have each published articles contending with the distinctive translation of διακρίνομαι as "doubt" in its NT usage.[2] After briefly summarizing their research, this article provides further arguments from a grammatical discussion of the Greek middle voice and an exegetical analysis of the ἔοικεν clause in James 1:6b. Finally, the practical effect of this translational decision is briefly discussed in a concluding pastoral consideration.

II.   Διακρίνομαι AS "DOUBT" IN THE NT

The traditional NT lexicons present five semantic domains for διακρίνω: (1) "to differentiate by separating, *separate*, *arrange*;" (2) "to conclude that there is a difference, *make a distinction*, *differentiate*;" (3) "to evaluate by paying careful attention to, *evaluate*, *judge*;" (4) "to render a legal decision, *judge*, *decide*;" (5) "to be at variance with someone, *dispute*."[3] These entries all comport with the classical/Hellenistic uses of the term.[4] The active verb διακρίνω is translated with one of these terms in each of its eight instances in the NT.[5]

The lexicons also commonly advocate a sixth, distinctive NT sense for διακρίνω. Bauer's entry is representative: "to be uncertain, *be at odds with oneself, doubt, waver* (this meaning appears first in the NT)."[6] Nine of the twelve NT instances of the mediopassive verb διακρίνομαι are commonly

rendered with this translation, including both instances in James 1:6 – but excluding James 2:4.[7] As examples of this distinctively biblical use of the term, Bauer cross-references the nine NT instances of διακρίνομαι mentioned above and cites three instances from the sixth century Greek historian Cyril of Scythopolis.

Commentators and exegetes have further substantiated this semantic domain for διακρίνομαι through reference to the direct reflexive sense of the middle voice in Greek, taking the classical/Hellenistic sense of "disputing" and extending it into "disputing with oneself," interpreted as an idiomatic reference to "doubting."[8] Etymological arguments have also been presented in this regard.[9]

Finally, there are syntactical constructions in the NT which place διακρίνομαι in antithesis with members of the πίστ-group ("faith") which have served to further bolster the lexical and grammatical points above, opposing "faith" to "doubting" in certain contexts.[10] This antithesis is present in James 1:6 as well (...ἐν πίστει, μηδὲν διακρινόμενος...).

III.   DISPUTING Διακρίνομαι AS "DOUBT" IN THE NT

The argumentation outlined above is palpably weak. A closer consideration of the evidence and argumentation in favor of the distinctively NT sense of διακρίνομαι as "to doubt" reveals that it is based upon logical, exegetical, and historical fallacies.

1. *Lexical analyses.*

a. *A distinctive NT meaning for διακρίνομαι.*

Postulating a distinctive NT semantic domain for διακρίνομαι requires the burden of proof to be shouldered by the one who wishes to advocate for a distinctive semantic shift away from the classical/Hellenistic senses of the term. During the six hundred year period surrounding the authorship of the NT there is no extant extra-biblical evidence for such a semantic shift in the use of διακρίνομαι.[11]

The NT authors were historically situated within the larger Hellenistic culture and it is commonly acknowledged that they wrote in the Koine Greek dialect. Matthew, Mark, Luke, Paul,

James, and Jude wrote in multiple literary genres at different times to diverse audiences for distinct

purposes and with a complex, variable level of interdependence upon each other's writings. It pushes

beyond the bounds of credulity to posit that these authors separately and simultaneously participated in a

sudden and brief semantic shift in the usage of διακρίνομαι while continuing to use the term according

to its classical/Hellenistic senses within the same contexts, but without any way of distinguishing

between them.[12]

It is far more reasonable to translate each instance of διακρίνομαι in the NT within one of the

classical/Hellenistic domains. No exegetical or theological difficulties are created by such a translation

in any NT instance.[13]

b. Disputing with the lexicons.

Lexicons are not the place for extended argumentation in favor of a particular semantic

domain, but are intended to be a catalog of lexemes, corresponding definitional glosses, and referential

examples; however, to appeal to the lexicon in the case of a dispute over the lexical semantics of a term

is question-begging.

DeGraaf helpfully points out that lexicographers arrive at their conclusions via a consideration

of the lexeme within its textual context and the tradition of its usage.[14] Later in this article we will

consider the diachronic development of διακρίνομαι which shows that a 1700 year old tradition has

developed within the history of NT translation (and all of its related disciplines), asserting that

διακρίνομαι may refer to "doubting" within certain contexts. This tradition has become embedded in the

standard Greek lexicons and every English translation of the NT. Resolving the dispute with this

translation, therefore, requires a consideration of the 2000 year old text under discussion within its

grammatical, historical, linguistic, and literary contexts.

In any case, Bauer's appeal to the writings of a sixth century priest and historian, Cyril of

Scythopolis, is an example of semantic anachrony. Cyril's writing is downstream in development from the Greek of the first century. His use of διακρίνομαι could reflect certain aspects of the development of Greek after the first century, but cannot be used to substantiate a proposed semantic development in the first century. Furthermore, each instance of διακρίνομαι in Bauer's citations of Cyril has been contested and a consideration of each literary context demonstrates that the terms in question should be translated according to one of the classical/Hellenistic senses as well.[15] The instances of the term in Cyril are incapable of supporting the traditional lexicons' distinctive NT sense of διακρίνομαι and would only contradict it if admitted as evidence.

c. *Self-referential cross-referencing.*

The problem of establishing the first century development of a distinctive NT semantic domain for a term through cross-referencing the first century corpus of literature known as the NT should be immediately obvious: it is a viciously circular argument. Any arbitrary (yet contextually plausible) semantic domain for any term could be established by such a method.

The lexical basis for διακρίνομαι as "doubting" has been disputed and found to be based upon dubious assertions, so our discussion moves forward to consider synchronic linguistic analyses of διακρίνομαι.

2. *Synchronic linguistic analyses from recent scholarship.*

a. *The use of διακρίνω/-ομαι in NT-contemporary Greek literature.*

DeGraaf cites 388 examples of διακρίνω/-ομαι in extant literature from 200 B.C. to 100 A.D. The majority of uses were located in Josephus and Philo and of these 388 instances, 139 are mediopassive. A common use of the term was in the passive voice in historical works discussing war and diplomacy, referring to the "dividing" of armies into companies. As discussed above, there are no extra-biblical instances of διακρίνομαι used as "doubting."

b. *The use of διακρίνω/-ομαι in the Septuagint.*

The Septuagint (LXX) exerted influence upon the thinking of the early church and the authors of the NT, so it is worth considering whether the LXX's use of διακρίνομαι may have influenced the NT's use of the term. Διακρίνομαι appears only five times in the LXX.[16] None of these instances contributes to a semantic shift in the use of διακρίνομαι, and each is translated with one of the classical/Hellenistic senses.

c. *The use of διακρίνω/-ομαι in the NT.*

An in-depth investigation into each NT occurrence of διακρίνομαι goes beyond the scope of this article. Both DeGraaf and Spitaler have independently performed exegetical surveys from different perspectives and have arrived at the same conclusion: there is no distinctive NT sense of διακρίνομαι.[17]

In certain NT instances διακρίνομαι is translated according to one of its classical/Hellenistic senses, and in others it is given a distinctive NT sense, "to doubt." Syntactical considerations show this translational decision to be arbitrary, such as the divergent translations in James 2:4 and Jude 22. As Spitaler and DeGraaf have demonstrated, there is no consistently applied syntactical basis for this alleged distinctive NT sense, and even the antithesis with πίστις/-εύω in certain texts is a misapprehension of those constructs. The antithesis between πίστις/-εύω and διακρίνομαι does not establish synonymy between διακρίνομαι and διστάζω simply because both terms are used in similar syntactical constructions. Rather, the antithesis demonstrates different senses of πίστις/-εύω being emphasized in the different constructs.[18]

3. *Grammatical analyses.*

a. *The Greek middle voice.*

Having surveyed the research of Baumert, Degraaf, and Spitaler, respectively, we will now add a grammatical line of argumentation to the case against the traditional mistranslation of διακρίνομαι

in the NT. The grammatical argument for viewing διακρίνομαι as "to doubt," based on an idiomatic reading of the direct reflexive sense of the Greek middle voice ("to dispute with oneself"), appears to be the strongest plank in the case for a distinct NT use of διακρίνομαι.

Unfortunately, the middle voice in Greek is often misunderstood by English speakers, since English has only active and passive voices. The Greek middle voice conveys a broad spectrum of nuanced senses for which English has limited or no grammatical equivalents.[19] It is best to understand the middle voice broadly, as marked for *subject-affectedness*, where the subject is also affected in some sense by the action undertaken.[20]

One common misunderstanding of this broad concept of subject-affectedness has been to oversimplify it, viewing the Greek middle voice as primarily reflexive (the subject acting directly upon or for itself). This is not only a reductionistic misunderstanding of subject-affectedness, but the direct reflexive use of the middle is marginal, at best.[21] In Greek, just as in English, "the reflexive idea is normally expressed with the active voice and a reflexive pronoun."[22]

Too often the form has eclipsed the function in our understanding of the various shades of meaning encoded by the Greek middle voice. Some verbs, such as those referring to grooming and hygiene, inherently carry an element of functional reflexivity (i.e. λούω, "I wash" and λούμαι, "I wash myself") which is not lexically encoded in the verbal forms. Unsurprisingly, these verbal functions are most commonly found in the Greek middle voice. Direct reflexivity is simply one narrow, rather peripheral example of subject-affectedness.[23] To reduce the broad range of middle voice categories to pure reflexivity is a mistake.[24]

These considerations have clear implications for the proposed understanding of διακρίνομαι as a direct reflexive middle used idiomatically to refer to "doubting" (i.e. "disputing with oneself"). There are no examples in extant extra-biblical literature of διακρίνομαι used as directly reflexive. The

direct reflexive use of the middle voice in Greek is relatively rare and most commonly associated with functionally reflexive actions.[25] There are no clues in the NT that διακρίνομαι is being used in an irregular fashion. Διακρίνομαι is most commonly rendered as a "reciprocal middle," since actions such as "separating/disputing/judging/evaluating/distinguishing" can generally only occur within a social context.[26]

The oversimplification of the role and function of the Greek middle voice by those who have asserted διακρίνομαι as a direct reflexive middle is only further illustrated when one considers that a stronger case for an idiomatic rendering of διακρίνομαι as "doubting" could be built upon the "mental process" middle category (i.e. "disputing in one's mind"), rather than the commonly overemphasized direct reflexive middle. The argument for διακρίνομαι as a mental process middle would be no less conjectural and would suffer from the same problem of being an extremely irregular use of διακρίνομαι, but would at least present a stronger case for rendering διακρίνομαι as "doubting," since the mental process middle more closely resembles the idioms of "doubt" cited by Louw & Nida and, according to Allan, it is prototypical of the Greek middle voice network. [27]

Quite simply, there is no grammatical warrant for understanding διακρίνομαι as directly reflexive. At best, it has been asserted based on the bare grammatical possibility of the middle voice encoding direct reflexivity, without any consideration of its plausibility in the particular case of διακρίνομαι. Worse, it may have been asserted based on conflating the narrow sub-category of direct reflexivity with the broader vocal characteristic of subject-affectedness.

b. *The etymology of διακρίνομαι.*

Moulton offers an etymological explanation for the distinctive NT sense of διακρίνομαι. He asserts that the prefix δια- in the compound word διακρίνω signifies *dis-*, as "between" or "to and fro." Consequently, "the middle *distinguish for oneself* naturally develops into *hesitate* by stressing the

dis-."[28] As just demonstrated, the middle voice for διακρίνω is not used reflexively in Greek anywhere. Further, despite other helpful observations on δια- by Moulton, this particular assertion commits the root fallacy.[29]

If there is no basis for rendering διακρίνομαι as "doubting," how did it become such a monolithic translational tradition? For the answer to that question we must turn to a brief diachronic analysis of the development of διακρίνομαι within the history of its ecclesiastical use and translation.

4. *Diachronic linguistic analyses.*

a. *The later development and translation of διακρίνομαι.*

As Spitaler's research has demonstrated, "The transformation of meaning [of διακρίνομαι] first occurs in translation from Greek to Latin but, again, not as result (sic) of semantic development."[30] Spitaler's extensive research into the development of διακρίνομαι in its patristic, medieval, and later uses is revealing.[31] To summarize his conclusions: the first three centuries of NT interpreters show no awareness of a distinctive sense of διακρίνομαι in the NT. In the early third and fourth century, interpreters present a consideration of διακρίνομαι (influenced by *The Shepherd of Hermas*) in conjunction with a psychological analysis of ὁ διακρινόμενος ("the one who disputes") as disputing because of doubts or fears. An unfortunate translation decision from Greek to Latin in the Vulgate (*haesitatio*) further contributes to the conflation of the lexical term διακρίνομαι with the psychological interpretation of the background of "one who disputes" as a "doubter." This particular *interpretation* was then pushed back into the *grammar* and *lexical semantics* of διακρίνομαι through its continued use in ecclesiastical tradition. It has since been read back onto post-biblical Greek texts as well (i.e. Bauer's citation of Cyril of Scythopolis). Today, this unfortunate use of the term has been solidified in every western ecclesiastical tradition, all of the standard NT Greek lexicons, and every English translation of the NT.

This dubious translation of διακρίνομαι should be overturned in favor of a translation decision which is faithful to the term in its original contexts. We will now consider some exegetical implications pertinent to redirecting such a long-standing, but clearly mistaken translation tradition.

IV. EXEGESIS OF JAMES 1:6

1. *Background of James 1:5-8.*

After the initial salutation (1:1), James links together a saying on the testing of faith (1:2-4) with a saying about asking in faith (1:5-8) using λείπω as a catchword association between v. 4-5, that steadfastness in trials would lead them to mature perfection, "<u>lack</u>ing nothing" (ἐν μηδενὶ <u>λειπ</u>όμενοι).[32] However, if anyone "<u>lack</u>s wisdom" (<u>λείπ</u>εται σοφίας), he should ask the God who gives to all "simply/whole-heartedly and without reproach" (ἁπλῶς καὶ μὴ ὀνειδίζοντος, 1:5). He should ask "in faith, disputing nothing" (ἐν πίστει, μηδὲν διακρινόμενος, 1:6a).

The construction of the clauses between 1:5b and 1:6a sets a reciprocal balance in the asking-relationship between the God who gives simply and without reproach to the one who asks in faith, without disputing.

A: αἰτείτω (Let him ask…)

B: ἁπλῶς (God who gives simply/whole-heartedly…)

C: μὴ ὀνειδίζοντος (…without reproach/insult…)

A': αἰτείτω (Let him ask…)

B': ἐν πίστει (…in faith…)

C': μηδὲν διακρινόμενος (…without disputing.)

God's whole-heartedness is signified by his non-reproaching; the faith of the one asking mirrors God's whole-heartedness through non-disputing, which results in receiving wisdom from God.

The one who disputes with God is then compared to a raging sea wave (1:6b). The disputer's

"double-souledness" (δίψυχος) clashes with the "whole-heartedness" (ἁπλῶς) of God (cf. 1:5, 8), toppling the reciprocal balance of 1:5b-6a. Such a "restless/unstable/anarchic" (ἀκατάστατος) person will not receive anything from the Lord (1:7-8).

2. *James 1:6b: The ἔοικεν clause.*

As demonstrated above, διακρινόμενος in James 1:6 should be rendered as "disputing" – not "doubting." However, the established tradition of mistranslating διακρινόμενος has also contributed to an unfortunate misunderstanding of the analogy presented in the subsequent ἔοικεν clause of 1:6b.

The traditional understanding of this analogy has been governed by the subject (ὁ διακρινόμενος) as one who is "uncertain," so that the mediopassive participles ἀνεμιζομένῳ and ῥιπιζομένῳ are rendered as passive. This gives an image of an uncertain person wavering between faith and doubt, like a wave of the sea being blown back and forth by the wind. This interpretation of the imagery is vivid and compelling and has likely served a role in bolstering the traditional mistranslation of διακρινόμενος. However, as we've seen, ὁ διακρινόμενος does not refer to "the one who doubts," so the analogy needs to be re-evaluated in light of the classical/Hellenistic sense, "the one who disputes."

As in our earlier discussion of the grammatical issues surrounding διακρίνομαι, we also find here that an oversimplification of the Greek middle voice has contributed to misunderstanding the mediopassive participles ἀνεμιζομένῳ and ῥιπιζομένῳ in this context. As with the direct reflexive middle discussed above, the "passive middle" is one of several shades of meaning to the middle voice. The Greek passive voice is not morphologically distinct from the middle, but is one sub-category of the middle voice.[33]

The passive rendering of the participles here is admittedly far more plausible than the direct reflexive rendering of διακρίνομαι discussed above. However, the mistranslation of διακρίνομαι in James 1:6 cannot be used to substantiate the passive voice in the analogy any longer. "Disputing" is a

reciprocal social interaction and it is unfitting to characterize "the one who disputes" as a passive sea wave, being blown back-and-forth between two positions.

More appropriate to the terms and their immediate context is the rendering of these participles as "spontaneous process" middles, a category closely related to the passive middle. The spontaneous process middle focuses on a process occurring within the subject, but without direct reference to the agent which is actually initiating the process. An example in English would be the sentence, "The forest burns." We know that a forest fire is initiated by a spark or other heat agent acting upon the trees – the trees are passive patients receiving the energy of some heat-producing agent.[34] However, in our sentence, "The forest burns," we use the English active voice to refer to the forest as the patient in the burning process as though it were agentive. This is a prime example of an action which would be expressed in the Greek middle voice to convey a distinct kind of subject-affectedness which carries elements of both passivity and reflexivity, without being reducible to one category or the other.

In the ἔοικεν clause of 1:6b there is no direct reference to the wind-agent at work upon the sea wave, just as there was no reference to the heat agent in our "forest fire" sentence above. Rather, the wind-agent is encoded within the participles themselves, which is a common trait of verbs used as spontaneous process middles.[35] Further, as Allan demonstrates, "Almost all middles denoting spontaneous processes have an active causative counterpart."[36] This is true of both ἀνεμιζομένῳ (ἀνεμίζω) and ῥιπιζομένῳ (ῥιπίζω). Clearly, ἀνεμιζομένῳ and ῥιπιζομένῳ are wind-caused actions, but the emphasis in the construction of this clause is on the process occurring within the sea wave itself, not the wind as its cause.[37] As "The forest burns," so also "The sea wave ripples and churns."

This rendering of the participles also comports most readily with the use of the term κλύδωνι in context, which is rendered as "raging" or "surging" waves in Lk 8:24 and Jonah 1:4, 12 (LXX). κλύδωνος is most commonly used in speaking of the destructive power of the sea during a raging storm.

A more formally equivalent rendering of James 1:6b in English might be: "The one who disputes is like a raging sea wave, rippling and churning." This rendering of the analogy comports nicely with the context of the paragraph, illustrating the proper translation of διακρινόμενος and emphasizing the divisive, disputatious nature of the person who is then referred to as "double-minded and unstable in all they do" (1:8, NIV), whose disputing is exemplified in the demonic accusation that God is the tempter (1:13).

These grammatical and syntactical considerations are further strengthened and illuminated by a consideration of the genre of James. Cheung has presented thorough and compelling argumentation for marking James' genre as a "circular epistle written after the manner of wisdom instruction" and locates the epistle within the broader tradition of Jewish wisdom literature, albeit with clear influence from the sayings of Jesus.[38] Jewish wisdom literature (in line with the mythologies of other ancient Near Eastern cultures) has a strong traditional theme of using the sea as an image for demonic chaos.[39]

Interpreting the "raging sea wave" imagery within its own biblical wisdom tradition gives a broader understanding of the analogy, conveying associations with chaotic, demonic restlessness and instability (ἀκατάστατος, 1:8). These associations help shed light upon the use of subsequent terms and images within the epistle, such as the demonic imagery surrounding the use of the tongue in 3:6-8.

Translating διακρινόμενος as "disputing," rather than as an isolated reference to "doubting," reveals that 1:6 is an introductory word regarding the much broader theme of speech ethics in James' epistle. The proper rendering of the subsequent ἔοικεν clause, interpreted in light of the Hebrew and ancient Near Eastern associations of the sea with primeval demonic chaos, serves as an introductory reference to the later appearances of the demonic, the devil, and the tongue as "set on fire by hell" (3:6). The proper translation of διακρινόμενος at 1:6 serves as a thematic introduction which coheres with the rest of James' discourse, while the traditional translation contributes to the unfortunate disjoining of the

introductory pericope in 1:5-8 from the rest of the epistle. The dubiousness of the traditional translation of διακρινόμενος in James 1:6 is beyond dispute.

IV. CONCLUSION

1. *Practical implication.*

  The overturning of such a long-maintained translational tradition will raise far more questions than can be discussed in the scope of this article. In conclusion we will briefly consider one of many practical implications of the preceding discussion for preachers and teachers, the pastor-theologians serving in the high calling of the local church context.

  The NT gives an overall description and understanding of the dynamics at work between *belief* and *unbelief* in the hearts and minds of people. The correct translation of διακρίνομαι in its NT instances places disputing in antithesis to faith in several contexts. Once we understood the antitheses in these texts to describe the relationship between *faith* and *doubt*; but now, if we are to be faithful to the language of NT teaching, we need to incorporate the antithesis of *faith* and *disputing* into our understanding.

a. *Faith and Doubt*

  Interestingly, some commentators in their discussions of James 1:6 felt compelled to qualify the term "doubt" in the translations. They seek to distinguish between the normal dynamics of faith and doubt at play in every Christian's experience, and a particularly pernicious form of doubting, akin to skepticism or outright disbelief.[40] It is striking to recognize that skepticism or outright disbelief would most commonly be recognized by the disputatious words of this particular sort of doubter, who expresses her doubts by disputing with the faith!

  A full-orbed presentation of the NT data on the relationship between belief and unbelief would go far beyond the limits of this article. Instead, we propose a brief outline for beginning to

incorporate the antithesis of "faith vs. disputing" into our existing understanding. For too long the shadow of the Enlightenment has loomed over our understanding of the dynamic between faith and doubt. We need to shift our understanding of the relationship between belief and unbelief away from the framework of faith as "Cartesian certainty" vs. doubt as "sinful skepticism." In our understanding of belief and unbelief, we have emphasized the internal noetic structures and experiences of the individual to the detriment of our understanding of faith working dynamically within a corporate existence – where the emphasis is upon one's profession of faith and conduct of life within the local church before the watching world.

We may diagram these different perspectives on the relationship between faith and doubting along parallel continuums compared to the logical antithesis of belief and unbelief.

[INSERT TABLE 1 HERE]

[INSERT TABLE 2 HERE]

[INSERT TABLE 3 HERE]

It would be thoroughly inadequate to reduce the complexities of the experience of the dynamics of individual and corporate faith to contrasting parallel continuums in a diagram. That is not this author's intent. Rather, we merely desire to sketch a suggestion at incorporating disputing into our understanding of the relationship between belief and unbelief, so that we might have a more biblical view which takes into consideration the proper rendering of διακρίνομαι in James 1:6 and across the NT.

In the proposed understanding, which incorporates the NT antithesis between faith and disputing (Table 3), the experience of the Christian life contains an admixture of faith and doubt, which may ebb and flow throughout life, but which is entirely located along the continuum of belief (Table 1). This admixture of faith and doubt in Table 2 is located somewhere along the entire continuum of belief and unbelief from Table 1, with an ambiguous line of distinction between faithful and unfaithful sorts of

doubting. Rather, the NT would appear to teach that the point at which belief is eclipsed by unbelief is when doubt turns to disputing – often privately in prayer with God first (1:6), then publically proclaimed (1:13), which can contribute to divisions within the community (2:4). Apart from God's grace in repentance, this disputing eventually devolves into disbelief, which results in a kind of congregational division through apostasy, schism or excommunication. Divided people (δίψυχος, 1:8) speak divisively (διακρινόμενος, 1:6), dividing congregations (διεκρίθητε, 2:4).[41]

This proposal is valuable because it incorporates the relationship between doubt and disputing into the overall framework of belief and unbelief as well. Confusion surrounding the relationship between doubt and dispute contributed to the initial errors in NT translation and ecclesiastical tradition. Interestingly, this proposal also reflects a noteworthy development in the use of ὁ διακρινόμενος by the Church Fathers – to refer not merely to "the one who disputes," but eventually to "the one who divides," speaking of schismatic heretics, those who divide the church in disbelief.[42]

A more biblically informed understanding of the relationship between belief and unbelief is of immense practical value in preaching to the hearts of diverse audiences, counseling people with complex problems, understanding the role of faith in prayer, as well as preparing churches to recognize and respond appropriately to ὁι διακρινόμενοι as they emerge, rippling and churning, within our congregations.

Table 1. Continuum between Belief/Unbelief

Belief--	--Unbelief

Table 2. Traditional understanding of the dynamic between Faith/Doubt

Faith--Doubt---Disbelief

Table 3. Proposed understanding of the dynamic, incorporating Faith/Disputing

Faith---Doubt	Disputing----------------------------------Division

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[1] English translations rendering διακρινόμενος in James 1:6a as "doubt(s)/ing" were: NIV, ASV, CEV, BBE, CJV, ESV, GW, GNT, HSV, CSB, LEB, NAS, NCV, NKJV, NIRV, NRS, RSV, DBY, TNIV, WEB, WNT, WYC, YLT. The KJV, WBT, TMB and RHE poetically translate διακρινόμενος as "waver/ing." *The Message* renders it as "without a second thought," an elaborative reference to μηδὲν διακρινόμενος as "not hesitating." Similarly, the NLT translates the clause ἐν πίστει, μηδὲν διακρινόμενος as "be sure that you really expect him to answer." All of these translations carry some clear connotation of "uncertainty."

[2] Norbert Baumert, "Das Paulinische, Wortspiel Mit krin-," *Filologia Neotestementaria* 15, no. 29-30 (2002): 19-64; David DeGraaf, "Some Doubts About Doubt: The New Testament Use of διακρίνω," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48, no. 4 (December 2005): 733-755; Peter Spitaler, "Doubt or Dispute (Jude 9 and 22-23). Rereading a Special New Testament Meaning through the Lense of Internal Evidence." *Biblica* 87, no. 2 (2006): 201-222; "Διακρίνεσθαι in Mt. 21:21, Mk. 11:23, Acts 10:20, Rom. 4:20, 14:23, Jas. 1:6, and Jude 22 - the 'semantic shift' that went unnoticed by patristic authors." *Novum Testamentum* 49 (2007):1-39; "James 1:5-8: A Dispute with God." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 71, no. 3 (July 2009): 560-579.

[3] BDAG, s.v. διακρίνω. [italics original]

[4] LSJ, 399.

[5] Mt 16:3; Acts 11:12; 15:9; 1 Cor. 4:7; 6:5; 11:29, 31; 14:29.

[6] BDAG, s.v. διακρίνω. Cf. Wesley J. Perschbacker (ed.), *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Peabody:

Hendrickson Publishers, 1990), s.v διακρίνω; Johannes P. Louw, Euegene A. Nida (ed.), *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), 31.37.

[7] Mt 21:21; Mk 11:23; Lk 11:38; Acts 10:20; 11:2; Rom 4:20; 14:23; Jas 1:6 (twice); 2:4; Jude 9; 22. Acts 11:2, Jas 2:4, and Jude 9 are translated in accordance with one of the classical/Hellenistic senses referenced above, rather than the unique NT meaning "to doubt." Relevant textual variants are located in Lk 11:38 and Acts 11:2.

[8] "In a number of languages 'doubt' is expressed by means of idioms, for example 'to have two thoughts' or 'to think only perhaps' or 'to believe only a little' or 'to question one's heart about.'" Louw & Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 371.

[9] J.H. Moulton and W.F. Howard, *A Grammar of the New Testament Greek, Vol. II: Accidence and Word Formation* (Edinburgh: T & T. Clark, 1929), 116.5a.

[10] Instances of this antithesis include Mt 21:21; Mk 11:23; Rom 4:20; 14:23; Jas 1:6. Jas 2:4 and Jude 22 both have a member of the πίστ-group present in their near contexts, but not within the same clause - yet Jas 2:4 is translated in accordance with the classical Greek meaning, while Jude 22 is given the distinct NT meaning.

[11] DeGraaf, "Some Doubts About Doubt," 735. Cf. Spitaler, "Διακρίνεσθαι," 2. My own research (using the *Thesaurus Lingua Graecae* database) surveyed 505 instances of διακρίνω in the mediopassive (20 uses of διακρινόμενος in particular), from the early 3rd c. B.C to the 4th c. A.D. Extra-biblical literature gives no examples of διακρίνομαι as "to doubt."

[12] Spitaler, "Doubt or Dispute," 202. Cf. Degraaf, "Some Doubts About Doubt," 754.

[13] DeGraaf, "Some Doubts about Doubt," 739-751.

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[14] DeGraaf, "Doubts About Doubt," 733-734.

[15] Spitaler, "Διακρίνεσθαι," 8-12.

[16] Jer 15:10; Joel 3:1-2; Ezek 20:35-36 (twice) and 17:20 (in a textual variant found in a single text tradition).

[17] DeGraaf, "Some Doubts about Doubt," 751-754; Spitaler, "Διακρίνεσθαι," 39.

[18] DeGraaf, "Some Doubts about Doubt," 739.

[19] Rutger Allan has presented a taxonomy of eleven categories for the classical Greek middle voice: passive middle, spontaneous process middle, mental process middle, body motion middle, collective motion middle, reciprocal middle, direct reflexive middle, perception middle, mental activity middle, speech act middle, and indirect reflexive middle. Rutger Allan, *The Middle Voice in Ancient Greek: A Study in Polysemy* (Leiden: Brill, 2003). Cf. Neva F. Miller, "A Theory of Deponent Verbs," in *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*, ed. Barbara Friberg, et al (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 423-430.

[20] "…the middle voice represents the subject as acting on, for or towards itself." K.L. McKay, *A New Syntax of the Verb in New Testament Greek: An Aspectual Approach* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1994), 21.

[21] "…the semantic reflexive… and the reciprocal are, at best, marginal functions of the middle voice." M.H. Klaiman, *Grammatical Voice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 103. "Grammars sometimes describe the Middle as primarily reflexive. Whether or not this is true for certain periods, it is manifestly not true of NT usage." C.F.D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 24. "What has been said of the history of the Middle prepares us for

the statement that this voice is quite inaccurately described by empiric grammarians as essentially

reflexive. As a matter of fact, the proportion of strictly reflexive middle is extremely small." J.H.

Moulton, *A Grammar of the New Testament Greek: Prolegomena*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T & T. Clark,

1929), 155. "Grammarians are undecided how exactly to characterize the Greek middle voice, but most

are agreed that the reflexive middle sense ('he washed himself')… is *not* the predominant one in the

Hellenistic period." Stanley Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic

Press, 1992), 67.

[22]Richard Young, *Intermediate New Testament Greek: A Linguistic and Exegetical Approach*

(Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 134.

[23] "Or to state it another way, certain lexical ideas tend to be encoded with middle morphology in

languages which use a middle voice. These lexical ideas include grooming or body care, naturally

reciprocal events such as embracing or wrestling, acts of cognition, emotions, changes in body posture,

and many more… Thus, far from being merely reflexive (the Direct Middle) or even only expressing

self-interest (the Indirect Middle), the Greek middle voice also encompasses a large number of actions

and categories involving the subject as the gravitational center of the action." Jonathan T. Pennington,

"Setting Aside 'Deponency': Rediscovering the Greek Middle Voice in New Testament Studies" in *The

Linguist as Pedagogue*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009).

[24] Allan has presented a consideration of the various nuances of the middle voice in classical Greek in a

"complex category network" which is intended to show the "prototypical" member of the network. This

gives the most typical use within the range of uses in the network, in this case the range of meanings

encoded in the classical Greek middle voice. His research highlights the "mental process" middle as the

category prototype, with the "indirect reflexive," "body motion," "spontaneous process," and "passive"

middles as secondary prototypes. Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 88-91.

[25] "The action is typically executed on the surface of the body by means of the hands." Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 64.

[26] "The partner in, or the subject/object of, a dispute, contest, or quarrel expressed by the middle/passive διακρίνομαι is external, that is, with someone other than oneself." Spitaler, "James 1:5-8," 562.

[27] See note 24 of this article.

[28] J.H. Moulton and W.F. Howard, *A Grammar of the New Testament Greek: Accidence and Word Formation*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T & T. Clark, 1929), 116.5a.

[29] Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 28-33.

[30] Spitaler, "Διακρίνεσθαι," 2.

[31] Spitaler, "Διακρίνεσθαι," 37-39.

[32] Ralph Terry demonstrates this use of "catchword association" is applied consistently throughout James' entire epistle, providing one form of lexical cohesion across the entire discourse. Ralph Terry, "Some Aspects of the Discourse Structure of the Book of James," *Journal of Translation and Text-Linguistics* 5 (1992), 106-125.

[33] "The principle to be understood here is that middle-passive morphoparadigms do not, in and of themselves, indicate necessarily either a transitive or intransitive nor middle nor passive meaning. They are ambivalent and flexible and must be interpreted each in accordance with the character of the verb in question and the contextual indicators of the instance under examination." Carl Conrad, "Active, Middle, and Passive: Understanding Ancient Greek Voice" accessed April 19, 2013 at http://www.artsci.wustl.edu/~cwconrad/docs/UndAncGrkVc.pdf.

[34] The language of "agent," "patient," and "energy transfer" is taken from Lankgacker's cognitive linguistic model of the prototypical transitive event. Ronald Langacker, *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*, Vol. II (Stanford: Stanford University, 1991), 285-287.

[35] This is a characteristic shared with the passive.

[36] Allan, *The Middle Voice*, 42.

[37] Other constructions which incorporate the active voice would be more suited to emphasizing the wind-agent.

[38] Luke L. Cheung, *The Genre, Composition and Hermeneutics of James* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003), 51.

[39] See Leland Ryken, et al (ed.), *The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1998), 765. For in-depth discussions of the relevant intersections between ancient Hebrew and Ugaritic texts see John Day, *God's Conflict With the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament* (Cambridge: University Press, 1985); Jon D. Levenson, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); Mary K. Wakeman, *God's Battle with the Monster: A Study in Biblical Imagery* (Leiden: Brill, 1973).

[40] Cf. Blomberg/Kamell, *James,* 53; Moo, *James*, 60-61.

[41] The aorist passive διεκρίθητε is often rendered in English as active here, i.e. "make distinctions." However, rendered according to its passive voice it comports well with the overarching Jacobean theme of wholeness/dividedness, i.e. "Have you not *become divided* among yourselves…"
Translating διεκρίθητε according to its passive voice also highlights the contrast with the middle voice of ἐγένεσθε ("become divided"), emphasizing that the partiality which produces external divisions results from individuals internally "becoming judges with evil thoughts."

[42] Ὁι διακρινόμενοι became a common epithet for those rejecting the authority of the Chalcedonian Council in the Christological controversies of the fifth century, conveying a *double entendre* – the Eutychians (among others) were *disputing* with the council's conclusions, which resulted in schismatically *dividing* the church. E.A. Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914), s.v διακρίνω. Cf. G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), s.v διακρίνω.